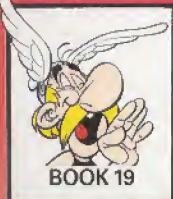


HODDER DARGAUD PRESENTS



BOOK 19

TEXT: GOSCINNY
DRAWINGS: UDERZO

Asterix

and CAESAR'S Gift



OUR STORY OPENS MELODIOUSLY IN A BAR IN A DISREPUTABLE PART OF ROME. AS THEY USED TO SAY IN THE COLLOQUIAL IDIOM OF THE TIME, 'VINUM ET MUSICA LAETIFICANT COR'...

♪ AND WHEN I'M DEAD DON'T BURY ME AT ALL, ♪ JUST PICKLE MY BONES IN ALCOHOL. ♪ AN AMPHORA OF WINE AT MY HEAD AND FEET, ♪ AND THEN I'M SURE MY BONES WILL KEEP....

HIC!... DE MORTUIS NIL NISI BONUM!

KISS ME GOODNIGHT, CENTURION... CENTURION, BE A MATER TO ME...

SHUT UP, TREMENS DELIRIOUS, YOU'LL BRING THE PATROL DOWN ON US!

PATROL? HUH! WHAT'S THE PATROL MATTER? WE'RE FINISHED WITH PATROLSH!

NOT QUITE, WE AREN'T, SO CALM DOWN!

HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE IN THE ARMY?

TWENTY YEARS, SAME AS EVERYONE ELSE. AND TOMORROW JULIUS CAESAR'S GIVING AS OUR HONESTA MISSIO! ♪ WITH A FREE GIFT OF A PLOT OF LAND TOO.

* DENOEB

JULIUSH CAESAR! HUH! WANT TO KNOW WHAT I THINK OF JULIUSH CAESAR?

SOON AFTERWARDS...



HOW LONG HAVE YOU DONE THEN, SON?

TWO YEARS.

ONLY EIGHTEEN MORE TO GO, SON! THE ENDS IN SIGHT!

YES: THIS TIME XVIII YEARS WHERE SHALL I BE? NOT IN THE ROMAN INFANTRY!?

* OLD ROMAN ARMY SONG, AN ADAPTATION OF WHICH IS STILL CURRENT IN ENGLISH SCHOOLS TODAY.

NEXT MORNING, IN JULIUS CAESAR'S PALACE...



WELL, CENTURION, SO SOME OF OUR VETERANS GET THEIR HONESTA MISSIO TODAY. ALL MEN WITH GOOD CONDUCT RECORDS, I HOPE?

YES, THEY'VE DONE FINE, O JULIUS CAESAR... BARRING ONE OLD SOAK WHO HASN'T BEEN SOBER IN TWENTY YEARS.

IN FACT HE'S IN THE GLASSHOUSE THIS VERY MOMENT. HE WAS USING INSULTING LANGUAGE ABOUT YOU LAST NIGHT.

INSULTING LANGUAGE, EH? WELL, I'VE GOT AN IDEA... WE'LL HAVE A SPOT OF FUN WITH HIM!



GET HIM OUT OF PRISON AND HAVE HIM LINED UP FOR THE PRESENTATION CEREMONY ALONG WITH THE REST.

YOU'RE GOING TO THROW HIM TO THE LIONS, O CAESAR?



WORSE! I'M GOING TO GIVE HIM A PRESENT!



SOME HOURS LATER...

ATTEN-SHUN!



**LEGIO
EXPEDITA!**

HMM?

CLICK!

CLICK!

CLICK!

CLICK!

CLICK!

CLICK!

HEY, YOU!
LEGIO EXPEDITA!

OH... RIGHT...

LEGIONARIES, YOU
HAVE COMPLETED YOUR
TWENTY YEARS' MILITARY
SERVICE. WITH THIS LITTLE
FORMALITY BEHIND YOU, YOUR
WHOLE LIFE LIES
BEFORE YOU...

YOU HAVE SERVED
ROME WELL, AND I AM
GOING TO REWARD YOU BY
GIVING YOU PLOTS OF LAND
IN OUR COLONIES...

HERE ARE YOUR
TITLE DEEDS TO
LAND AT
NEMAUSUS...

* NIMES

YOU HAVE
BEEN ALLOTTED
LAND NEAR
ARELATUM...

* ARLES

AND IT'S
AQUAE SEXTIAE*
FOR YOU...

* AIX

THIS IS
THE MAN.

I'D NEVER
HAVE GUESSED!

I'VE GOT SOMETHING
SPECIAL FOR YOU... I'M
GIVING YOU A LITTLE
VILLAGE BY THE SEASIDE
IN ARMORICA...

YOU ARE?

... A LITTLE
GAULISH VILLAGE
SURROUNDED BY
FORTIFIED
ROMAN CAMPS.

AVE,
CLAUDIUS!

WE MUST HAVE
A REUNION
SOME TIME AND
CHAT ABOUT THE
GOOD OLD DAYS

YES, WE'VE HAD
SOME FUN, COME
TO THINK OF IT!

REMEMBER THAT
TIME I LOOKED THE
OPTIO STRAIGHT IN
THE EYE AND I SAID
TO HIM, QUI HABET
AURES AUDIENDI,
AUDIAT, I SAID?

WHAT'S THE GOOD
OF A GAULISH
VILLAGE? CAN'T
DRINK A GAULISH
VILLAGE, CAN I?

HEY, EGGANLETTUS!
WANT TO BUY A
VILLAGE?

NO THANKS I'VE
GOT A PLOT OF LAND
NEAR NICAEA. I'M
GOING TO GROW
SALAD STUFF.

NICE

HAVE A NICE TIME IN ARMORICA,
TREMENSDEURIUS! AVE!

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

SOME DAYS LATER, IN AN INN AT
ARASIOX ON ROMAN ROAD VII

ORANGE

**WINE!
MORE WINE,
BY MERCURY!**

YOU'VE HAD QUITE
ENOUGH, AND IT'S
CLOSING TIME. COME
ON, PAY UP!

PAY?

PAY!....

HAHAHAHA!

I CAN'T PAY LANDLORD,
I HAVEN'T GOT ANY
MONEY!

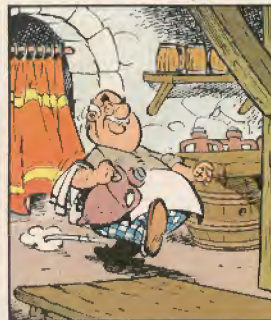
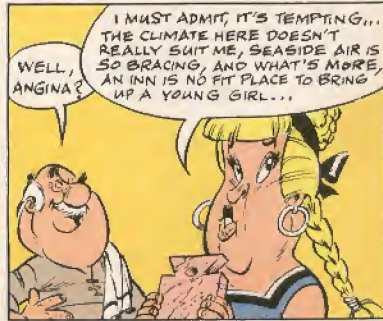
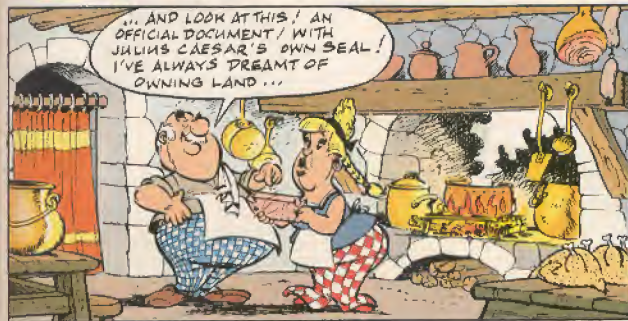
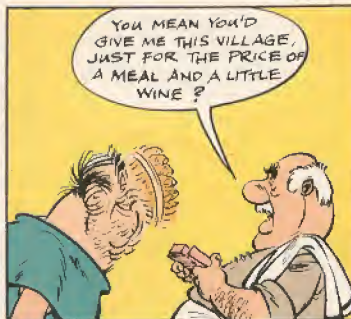
WHAT?

NO, BUT LISTEN HERE!
I HAVEN'T A SESTERTIUS TO
MY NAME, BUT I'M RICH!
GIVE ME SOME WINE AND
I'LL GIVE YOU A WHOLE
VILLAGE!

A
VILLAGE?

THAT'S RIGHT, A VILLAGE!
A LOVELY SEASIDE VILLAGE
IN ARMORICA!

SEE THIS TABLET BEARING
JULIUS CAESAR'S
OWN SEAL?



YES, A TYPICAL LITTLE GAULISH VILLAGE, COMPLETE WITH WARRIORS, CRAFTSMEN, TRADESMEN, DRUID AND BARD...



"... AND A CHIEF WHO IS EASY-
GOING, THOUGH INCLINED TO
STAND ON CEREMONY..."

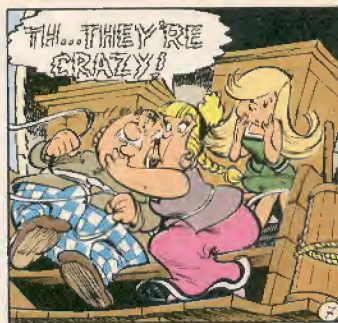
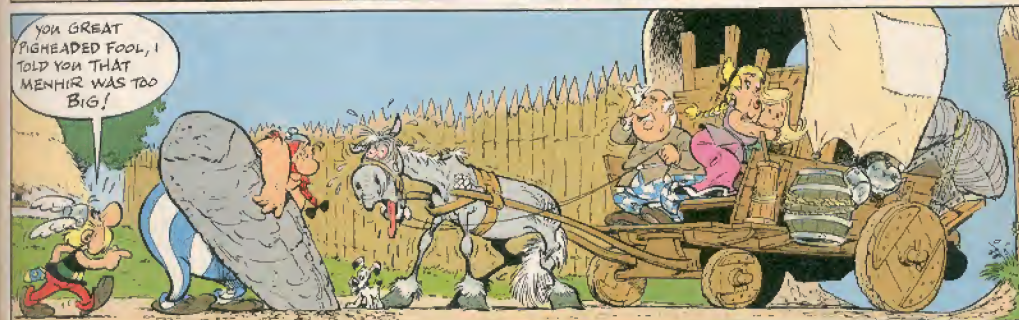
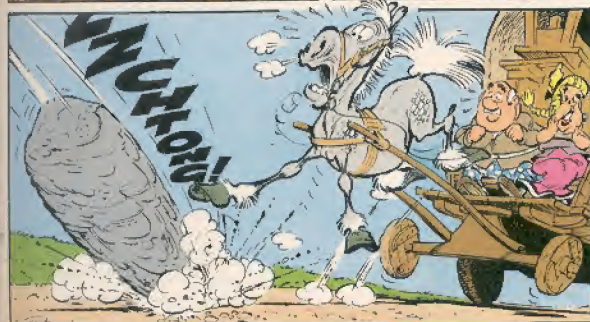
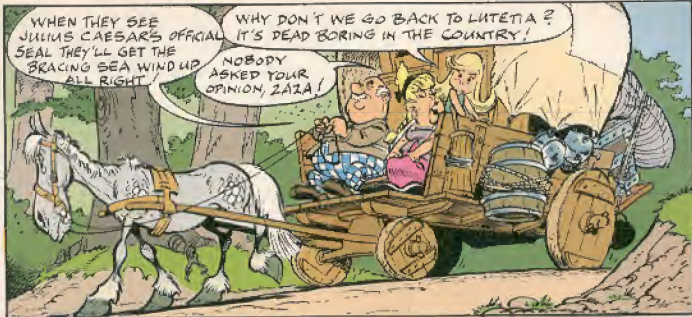
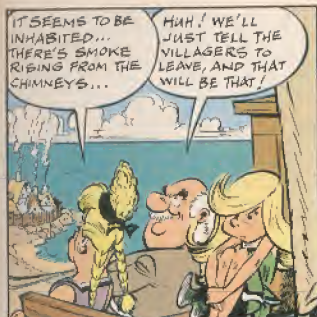


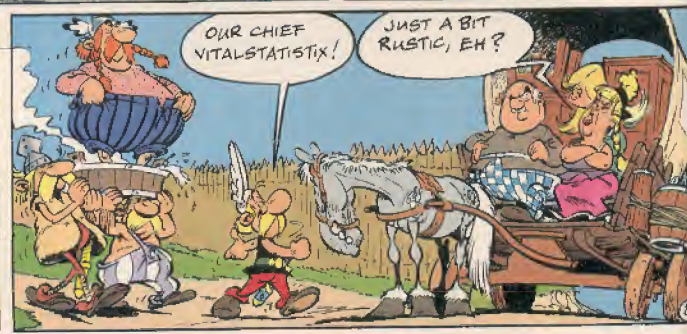
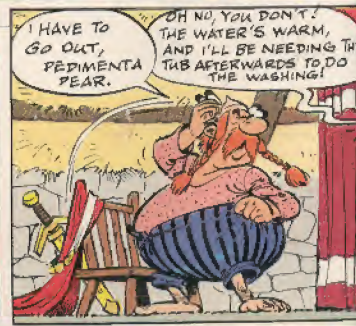
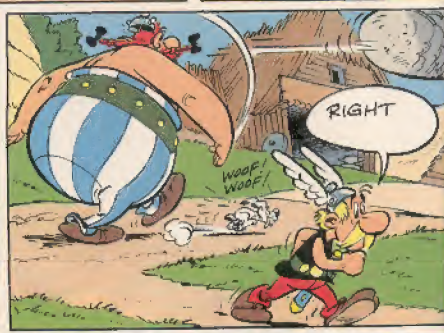
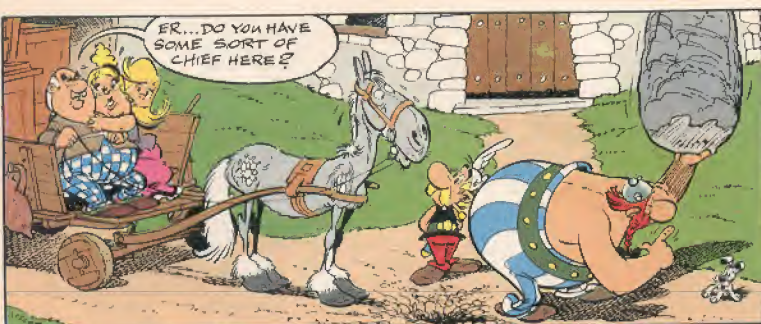
**BUT DIDN'T I FORBID
YOU TO SNEEZE WHEN
CARRYING ME?**

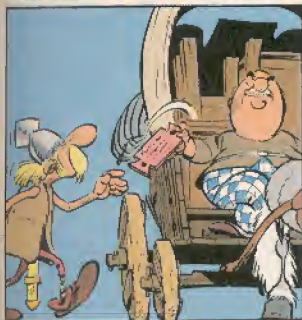
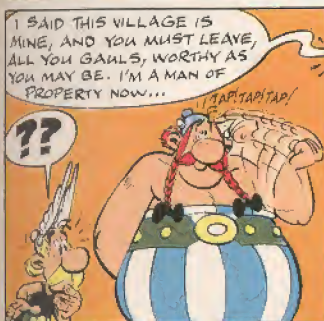


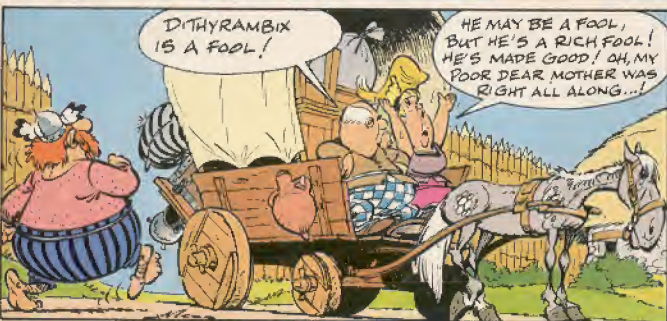
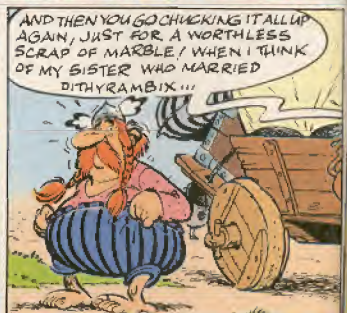
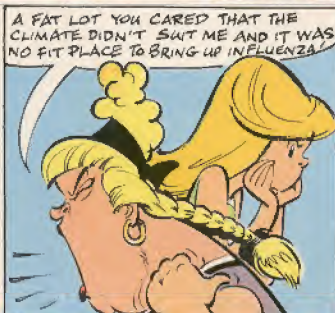
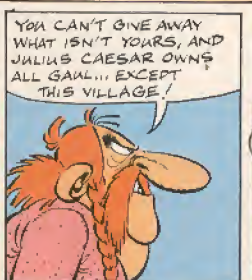
OFF
WE GO!

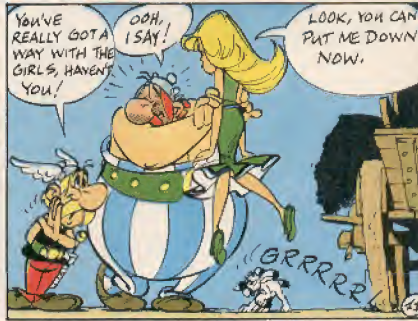
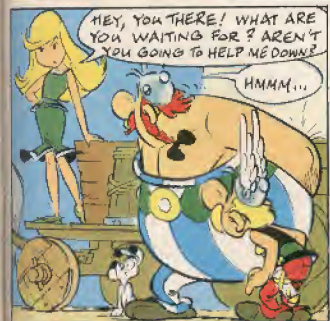
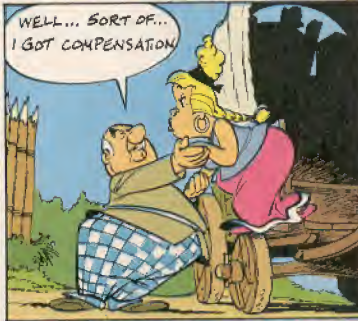
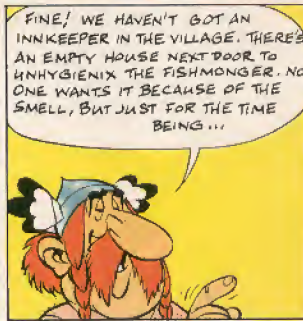
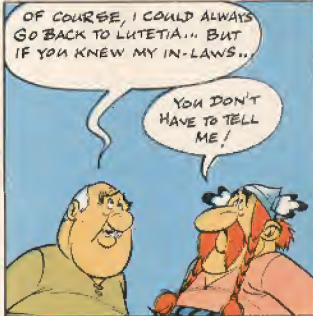


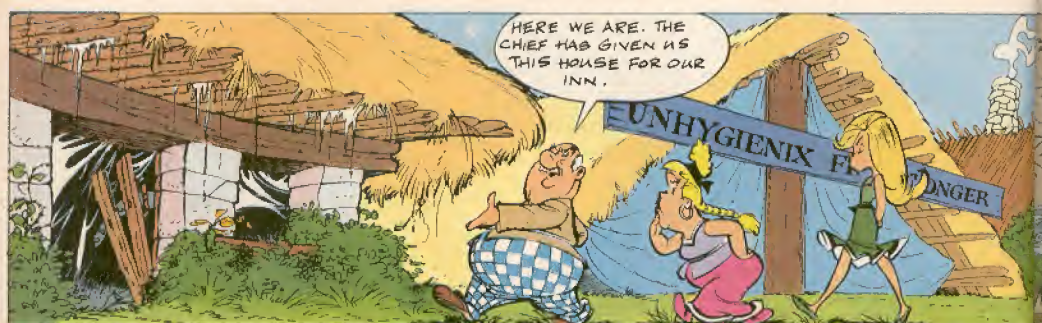












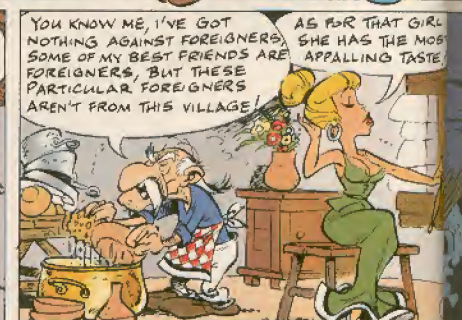
WHAT? YOU MEAN WE'VE LEFT OUR NICE INN AT ARAUSIO JUST TO OPEN ANOTHER IN THIS WRETCHED VILLAGE, WHEN THE WHOLE PLACE BELONGS TO US ANYWAY?

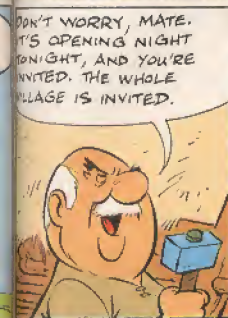
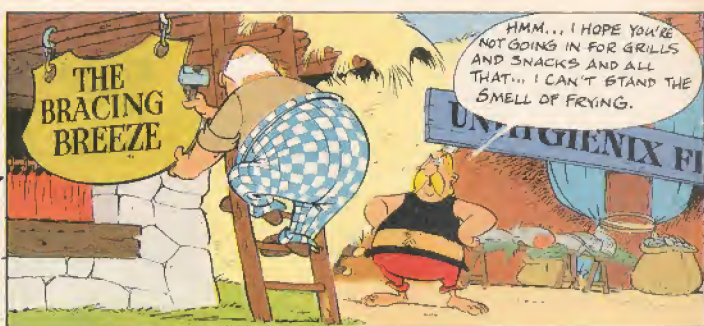
BUT THEY DON'T WANT TO GIVE US THE VILLAGE!

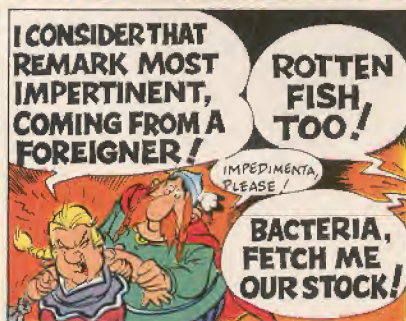
OH, LET'S GO BACK TO UNCLE DITHYRANBIX IN LUTETIA!

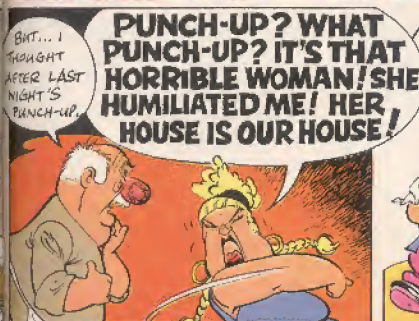
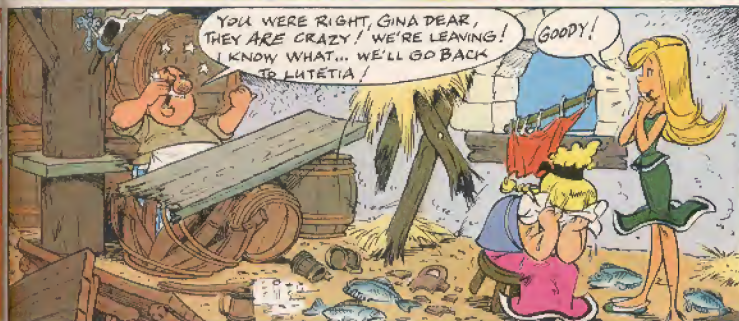
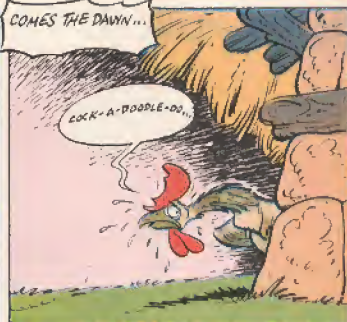
NO, NO! WE SHALL BE VERY COMFORTABLE HERE... AND THE AIR'S SO BRACING!

BRACING? IT STINKS OF ROTTEN FISH!









WE'VE COME TO HELP YOU CLEAR UP THE MESS... OUR FRIENDS MEAN WELL, YOU KNOW. THEY'RE JUST A BIT HIGH-SPIRITED, THAT'S ALL...

AND I'VE BROUGHT YOU A BOAR FOR BREAKFAST.

I DON'T THINK THIS IS QUITE THE MOMENT...

OH YES IT IS! WE SHAN'T FORGET YOUR KIND GESTURE...

ESPECIALLY AS MY HUSBAND ORTHOPAEDIX INTENDS TO BECOME CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE

WHAT? CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE? HOW ABOUT ME?

OUR LAWS CLEARLY STATE THAT ANYONE AT ALL HAS THE RIGHT TO STAND FOR ELECTION. IF HE GETS A MAJORITY VOTE, HE TAKES OVER FROM THE OLD CHIEF.

I'M GOING TO FLING HIM OUT OF THE VILLAGE, I AM!

OH, LET HIM MAKE A FOOL OF HIMSELF WHEN HE FINDS NO ONE WANTS HIM FOR CHIEF HE'LL LEAVE, ALONG WITH THAT FAT WIFE OF HIS!

WE'LL SOON SEE WHO'S CHIEF: HER OR ME!

ORTHOPAEDIX!

YES?

SO YOU'RE THINKING OF TAKING OVER FROM ME AS CHIEF?

ER...

THAT'S RIGHT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, WHY DON'T I SHUT UP? THIS IS MAN'S WORK!

ORTHOPAEDIX! ARE YOU GOING TO LET HER SPEAK TO ME LIKE THAT?

ER... WELL... NO.

THE FESTIVAL OF THE GOD LUG IS IN FIFTEEN DAYS' TIME! IF YOUR FOOL OF A HUSBAND GETS MORE VOTES THAN MINE THEN, AND ONLY THEN, HE BECOMES CHIEF OF OUR VILLAGE!

RIGHT

WHAT?

YOU WANTED ME, VITALSTATISTIX?

THAT'S RIGHT, CACOFONIX...
I'VE GOT A LITTLE JOB
FOR YOU...

IT'S NOT THAT I DOUBT THEIR
LOYALTY, EXACTLY, BUT I'D LIKE
YOU TO SOUND OUT OUR
FRIENDS: SEE IF THEY WANT
A CHANGE OF CHIEF.



LATER...

WELL,
WHAT
NEWS?

GERIATRIX IS BACKING YOU. HE
SAYS HE'S GOT NOTHING AGAINST
FOREIGNERS BUT THEY DON'T
BELONG HERE. THE OTHERS DON'T
MIND ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, SO
LONG AS THEY STILL GET PLENTY OF
BOARDS AND ROMANS...

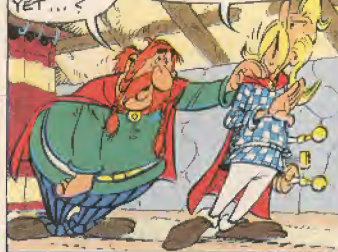
FULLAUTOMATIX THOUGHT I WAS
GOING TO SOUND HIM OUT IN SONG
SO HE KNOCKED ME OUT FIRST.

YOU HAVEN'T
VOICED YOUR
OWN OPINION
YET...?

HUH! YOU DON'T LIKE MY
VOICE ANY MORE THAN
THE REST OF THEM!

WHAT, ME?
I SIMPLY
LOVE YOUR
VOICE!

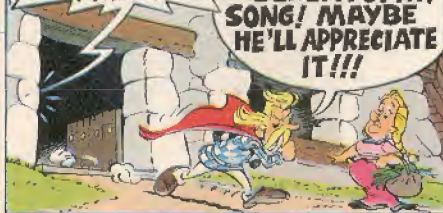
YOU DO? LISTEN TO
THIS NEW PROTEST SONG
I'VE JUST COMPOSED,
THEN...



♪ FREEDOM FIGHTERS THE WORLD
OVER OWE THIS SONG TO CACOFONIX,
THE ORIGINAL TUNE HAS, OF COURSE,
BEEN EXTENSIVELY REVISED...

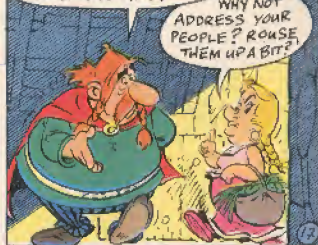
**STOP! I'M
OVERCOME ALREADY!
THIS IS A PROTEST...
MARCH!**

**ALL RIGHT,
ORTHOPAEDIX
CAN HAVE THE
BENEFIT OF MY
SONG! MAYBE
HE'LL APPRECIATE
IT!!!**



PEDIMENTA, I FEEL WE MAY
HAVE MADE A MISTAKE...
THAT'S ONE PROTEST
VOTE ALREADY!

WHY NOT
ADDRESS YOUR
PEOPLE? ROUSE
THEM UP A BIT?





MY FRIENDS! CERTAIN PERSONS HAVE DARED TO SUGGEST A CHANGE OF CHIEF!! I KNOW YOU WILL THINK THIS AS FUNNY AS I DO...



FOREIGNERS OUT! FOREIGNERS OUT!

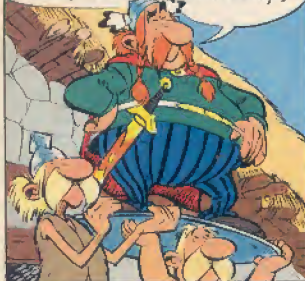


YES, YES, THAT'LL DO, THANK YOU, GERATRIX.

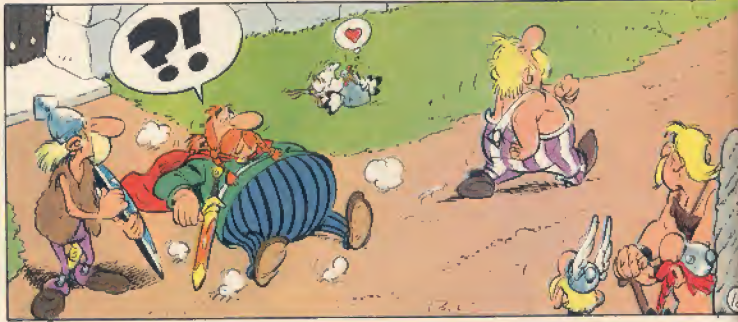
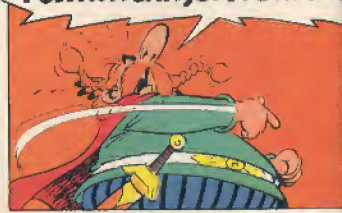
IF THE SAME OLD CHIEF STAYS IN OFFICE, WILL HE GUARANTEE THE FRESHNESS OF GOODS SOLD BY CERTAIN TRADESMEN? WE WANT CONSUMER PROTECTION!

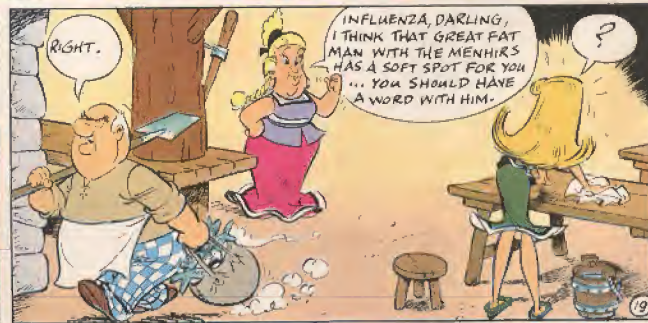
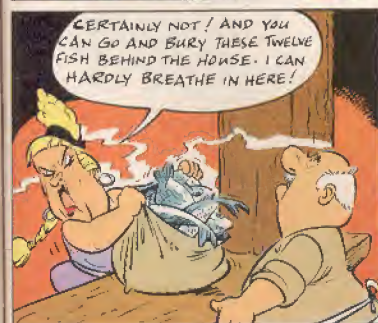
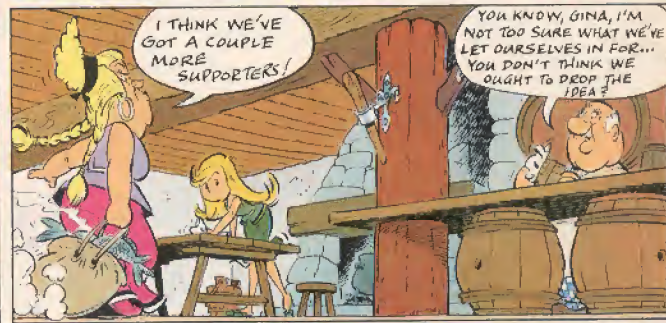
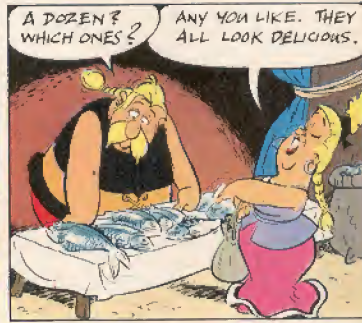
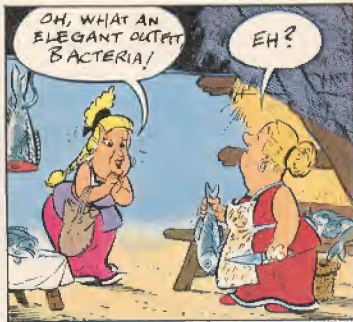
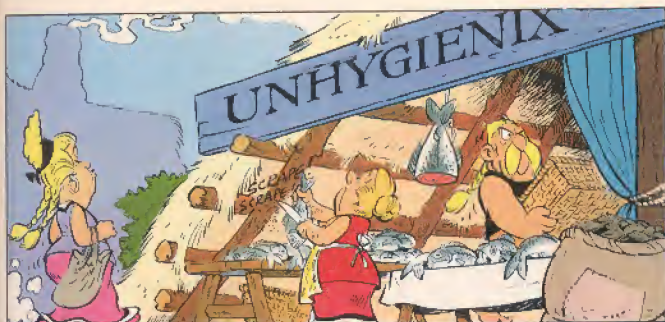


CONSUMER PROTECTION IS UPPERMOST IN MY MIND, FULLIAUTONATIX!



OH, FOR TOUTATIS' SAKE! THIS IS THE END! ANYONE WHO ISN'T HAPPY ABOUT MY POSITION CAN JUST PUSH OFF!





YOU MEAN THE ONE CALLED OBELIX? BUT WHAT FOR?

TO HELP YOUR FATHER GET ELECTED CHIEF OF THIS VILLAGE, OF COURSE!

OH, MUMMY! DAD IS RIGHT. DO LET'S GO BACK TO LUTETIA!

BUT ZAZA, IF YOUR FATHER IS ELECTED CHIEF YOU'LL HAVE PLENTY OF TRIPS TO LUTETIA TO BUY DRESSES AND JEWELLERY!

DRESSES? JEWELLERY?

OF COURSE! A CHIEF'S DAUGHTER MUST BE DRESSED LIKE A PRINCESS!

SOON AFTERWARDS...



HELLO, OBELIX... I CAN CALL YOU OBELIX, CAN'T I? I'M INFLUENZA, OR ZAZA IF YOU'D RATHER...

ZAZA?

OBELIX, I'D LIKE TO GO AND PICK SOME... WELL, WHATEVER PEOPLE DO PICK IN THESE BEIGHTED... THESE BEAUTIFUL WOODS.

OH, ZAZA, I'M AFRAID YOU MUST FIND US ALL BORES.

BOARS? THAT'S IT! I JUST LOVE BOARS!

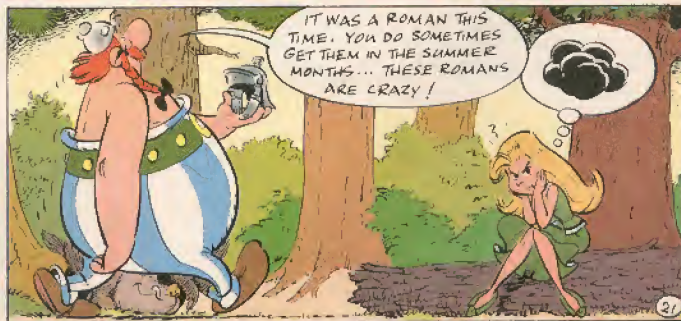
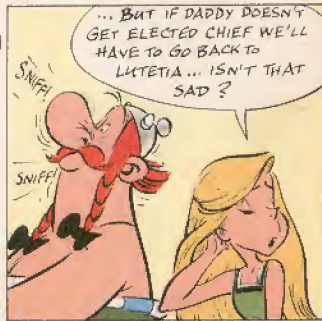
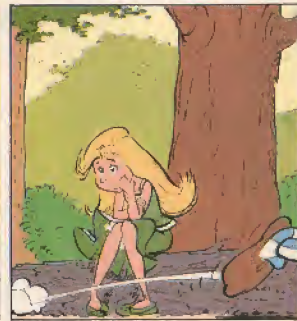
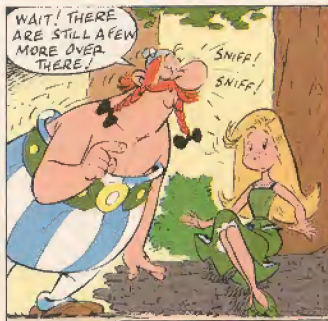
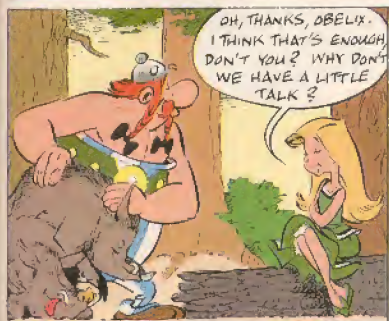
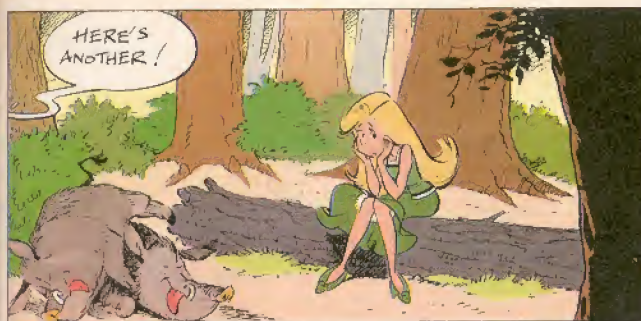
CLAP! CLAP!

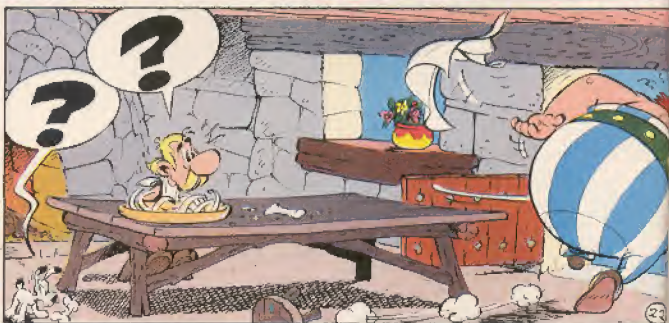
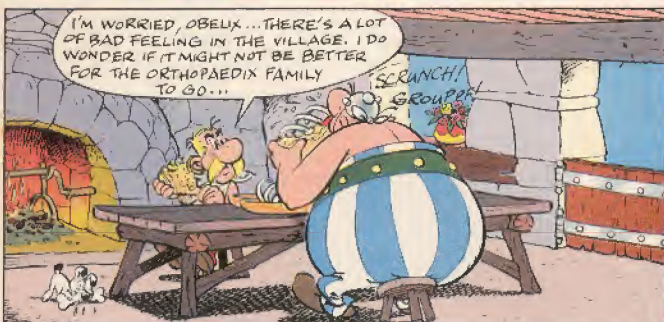
COME ON, OBELIX, LET'S GO AND PICK SOME BOARS!

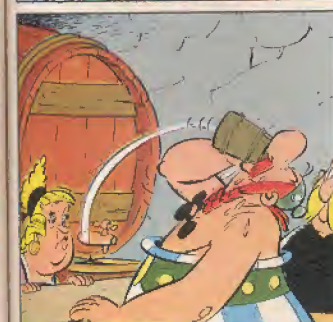
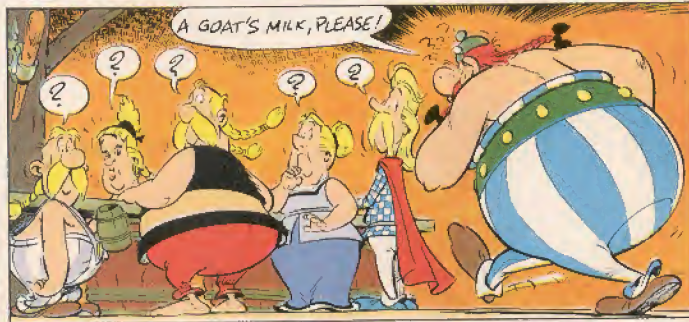
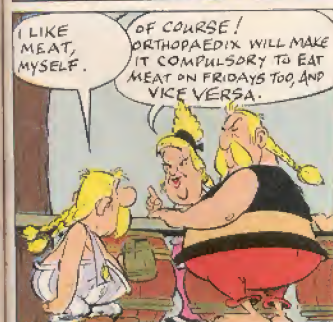
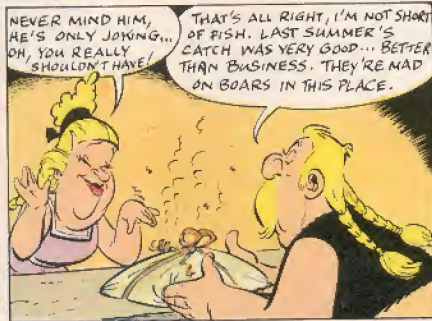
YOU CAN SOMETIMES PICK OFF ROMANS IN THE FOREST TOO, BUT THEY'RE KEEPING A LOW PROFILE JUST NOW, SO I DON'T KNOW IF WE'LL FIND ANY TODAY.

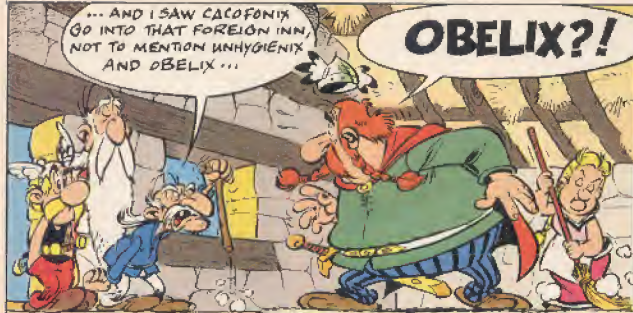
ROMANS? OH, HOW WITTY YOU ARE, OBELIX!

I AM?

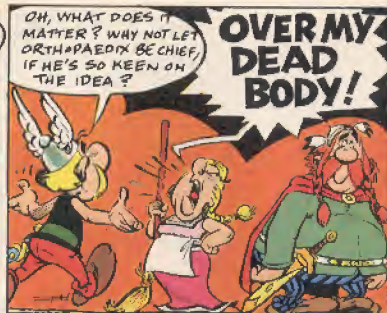








OBELIX?!



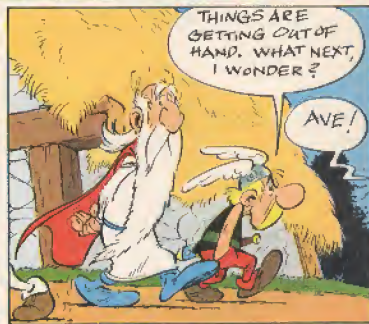
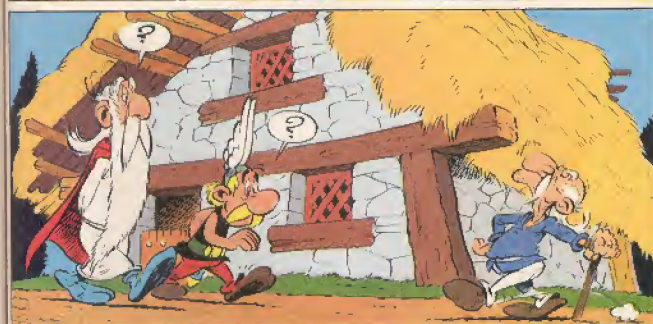
**MY FRIENDS,
THESE ARE TROUBLED
TIMES!...**

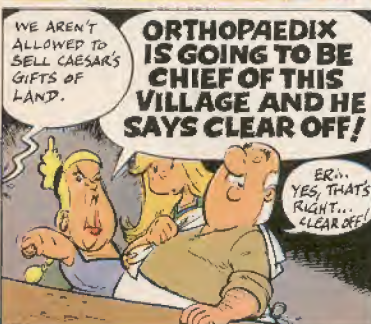
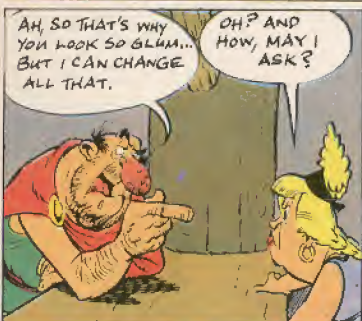
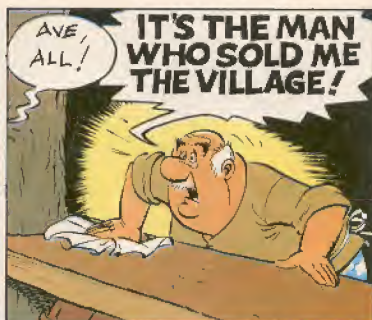


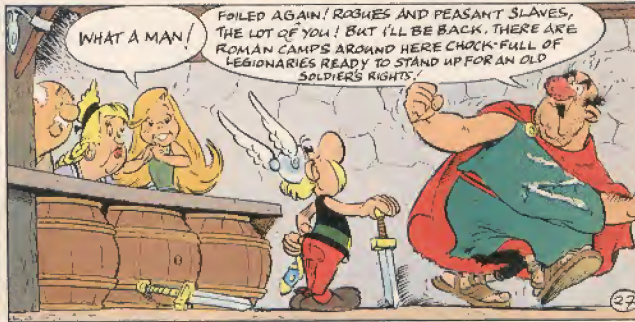
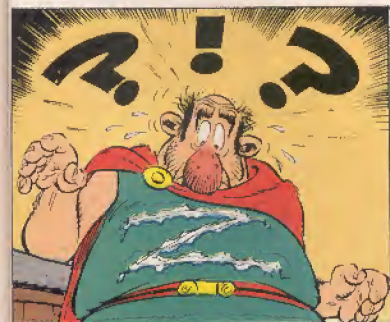
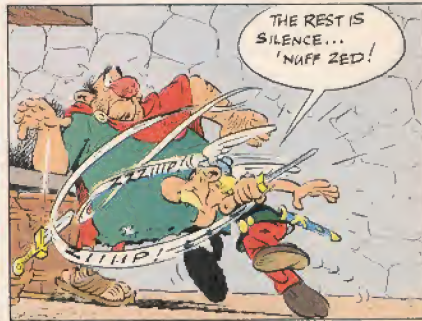
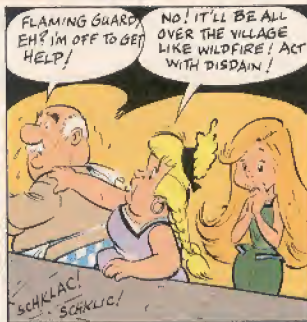
**FRIENDS,
I OFFER MYSELF
FOR ELECTION!
AS YOUR CHIEF,
I SHALL BE
ENERGETIC!! TOUGH!
INFLEXI...**

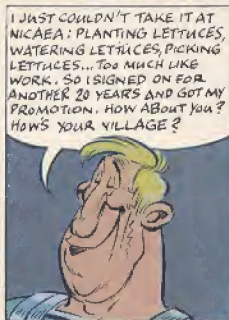
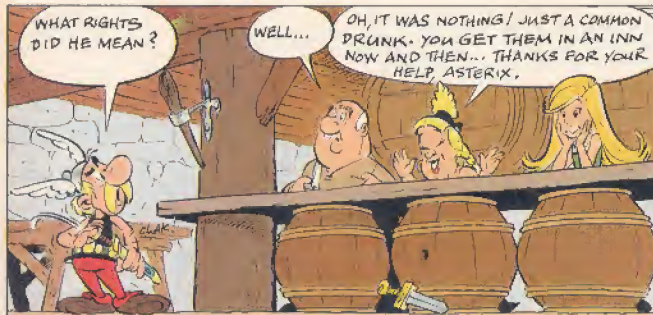


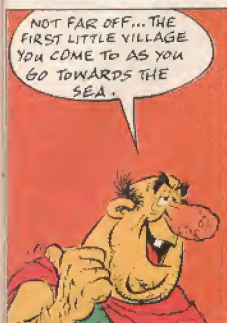
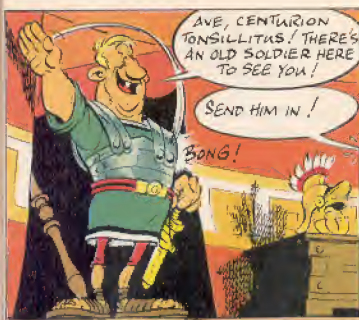
**WHAT DO WE
SEE CONFRONTING
US? ON THE ONE
HAND, FOREIGNERS
TRYING TO TAKE US
OVER! ON THE OTHER,
A WEAK, APATHETIC
CHIEF!**





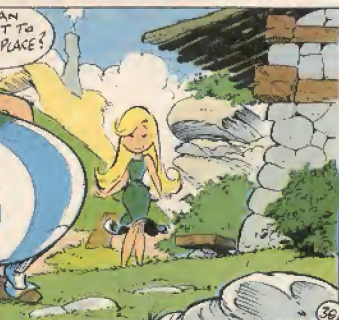
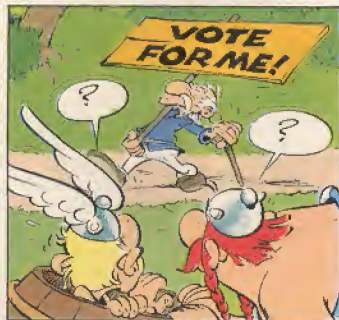
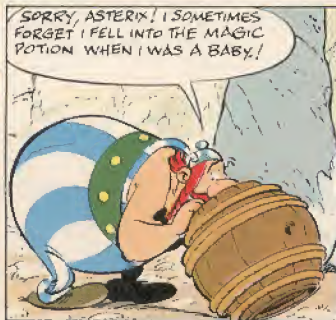
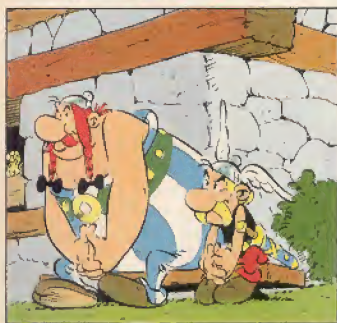
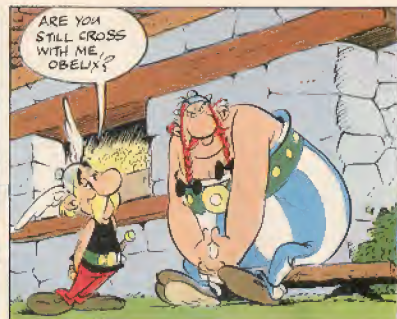
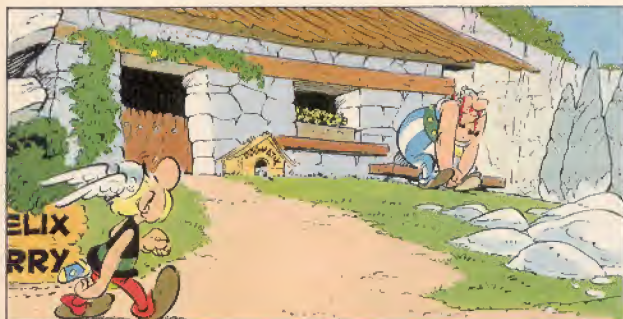


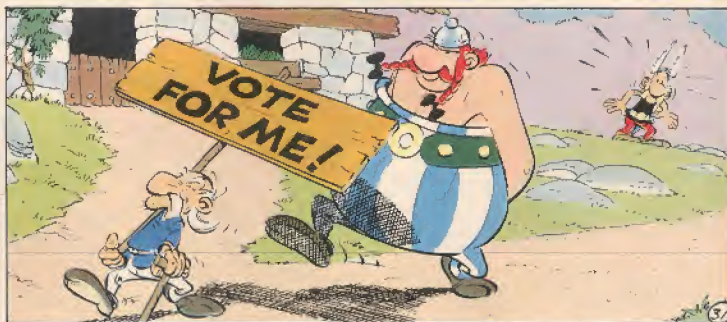
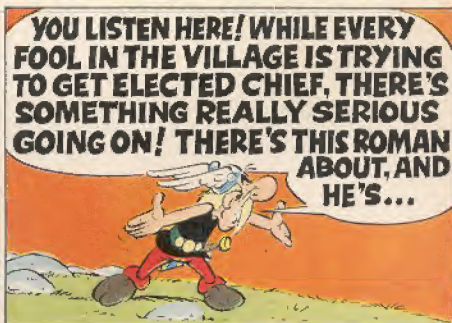


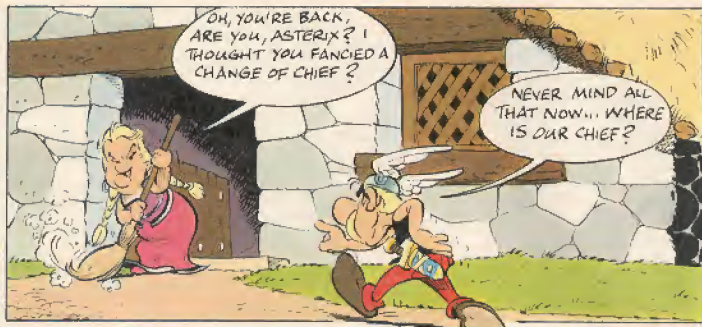


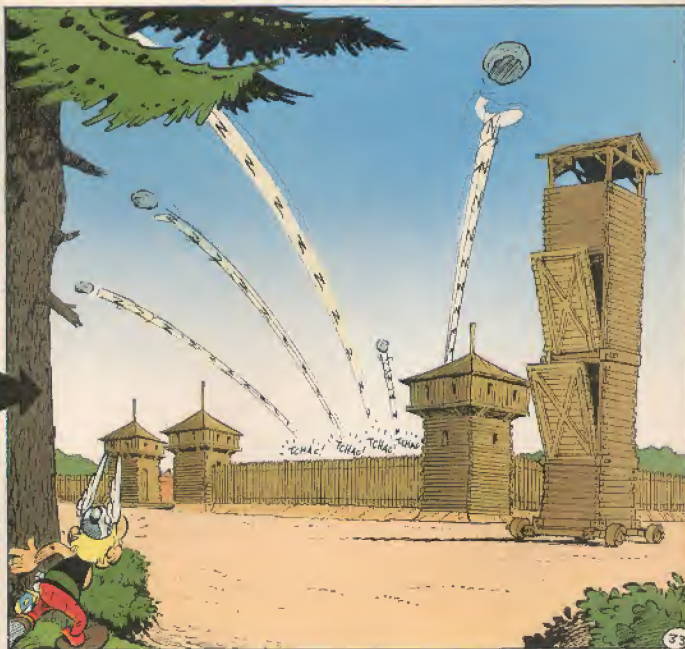
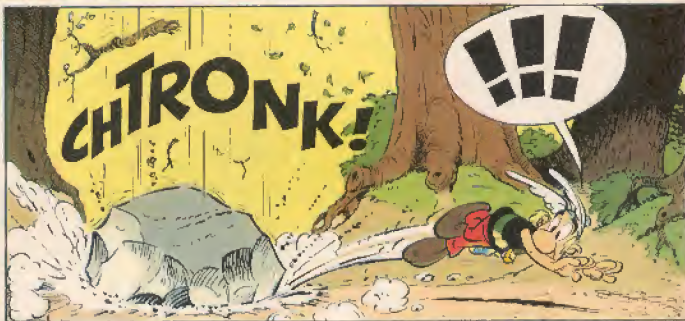
WHAT? THE VILLAGE FULL OF MADMEN? CAESAR GAVE YOU THAT VILLAGE FULL OF MADMEN?!

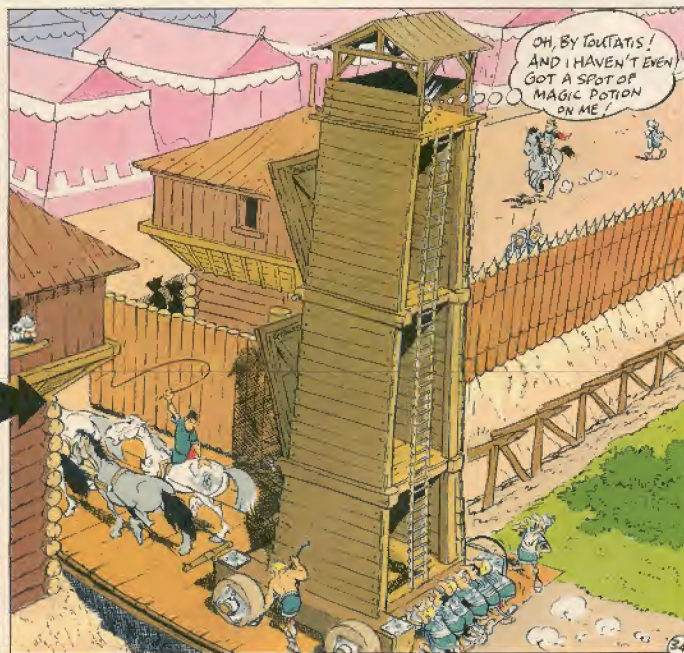
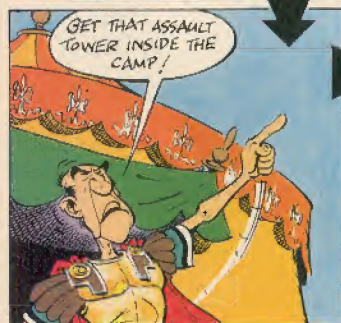
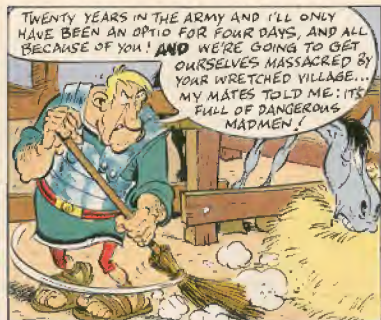












**CEN... CEN...
CENTURIOOOON!**



**THERE'S SOMEONE UP ON
TOP OF THAT ASSAULT
TOWER! IT LOOKS LIKE A
GAUL! WE'RE BEING
ASSAULTED!**



**RAISE THE
ALARM!**

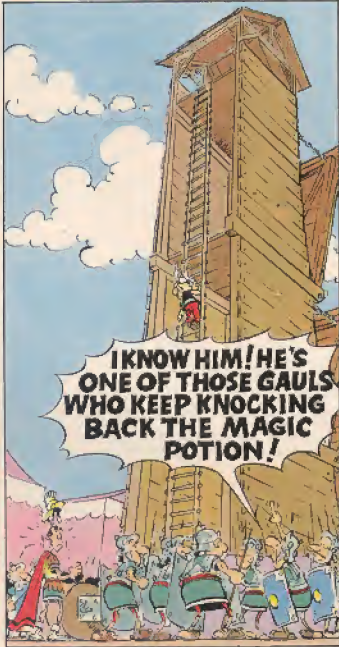


**CALM DOWN! WE'VE GOT
ENOUGH PROVISIONS TO
HOLD OUT FOR A LONG,
LONG SIEGE...**

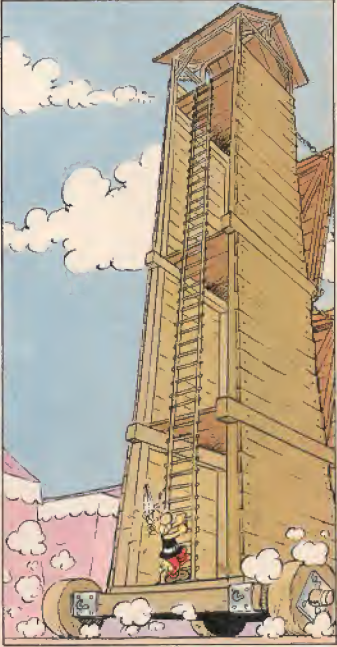


**COME DOWN
FROM THERE,
WHOEVER
YOU ARE!**

**IF YOU
SAY SO.**

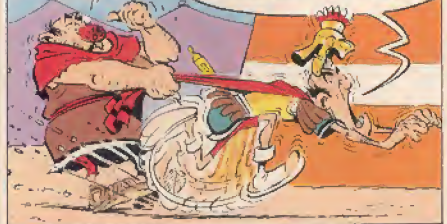


**I KNOW HIM! HE'S
ONE OF THOSE GAULS
WHO KEEP KNOCKING
BACK THE MAGIC
POTION!**



**HEY, DON'T YOU THINK
YOU'RE OVER-REACTING
A BIT? THERE'S ONLY
ONE OF HIM, AND
YOU...**

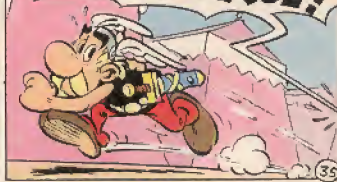
**YOU FATHEAD,
HE'S FULL OF
MAGIC POTION!**

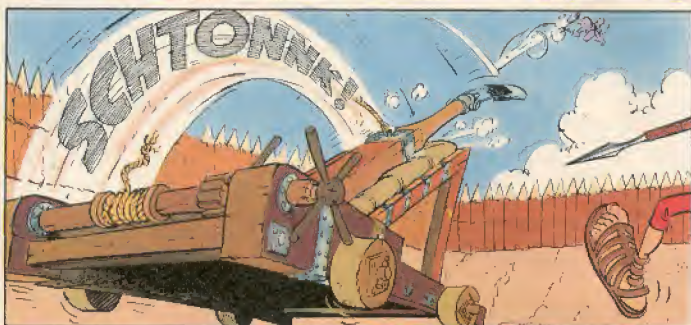
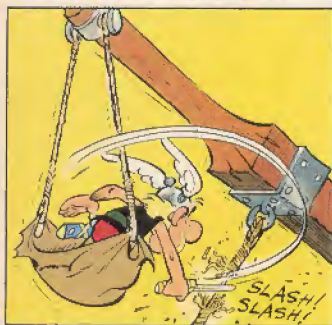
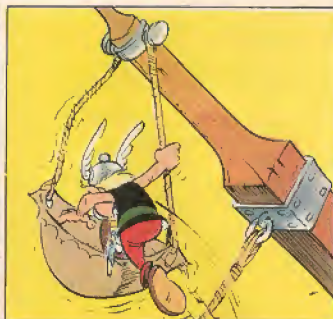


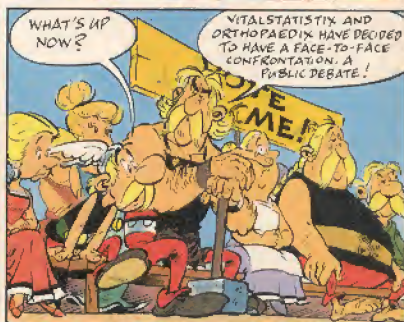
**I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF
THIS CAMP BEFORE THEY
NOTICE ANYTHING FUNNY...**



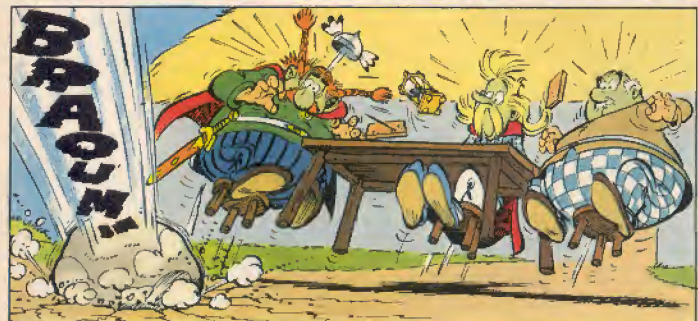
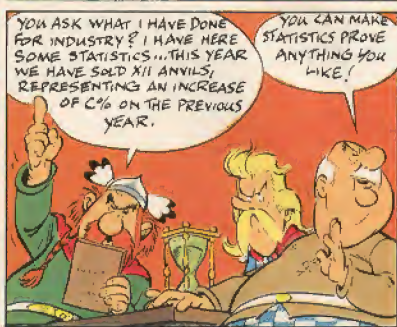
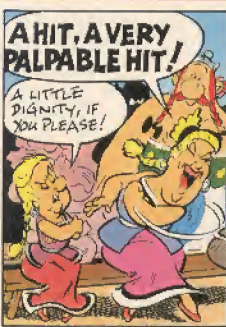
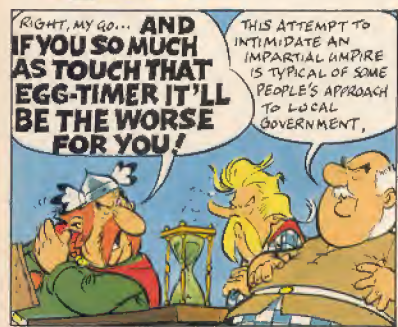
**LOOK... LOOK, HE'S RUNNING!
AND IF HE'S RUNNING FOR IT,
THAT MEANS HE ISN'T FULL OF
MAGIC POTION AFTER ALL!
CHAAAARGE!**

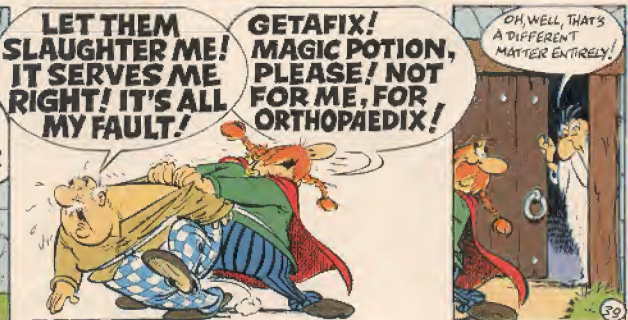
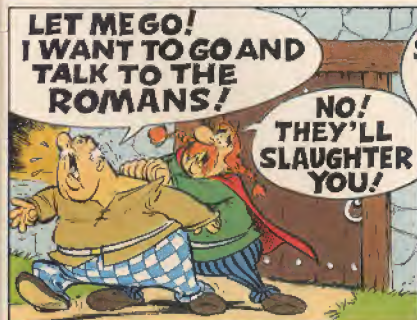
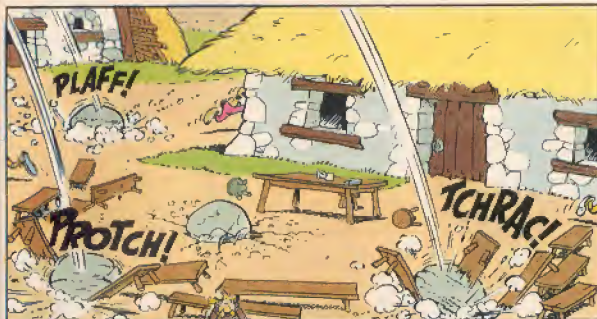


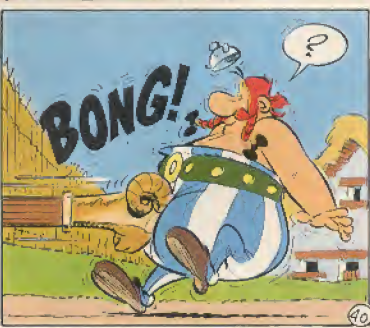
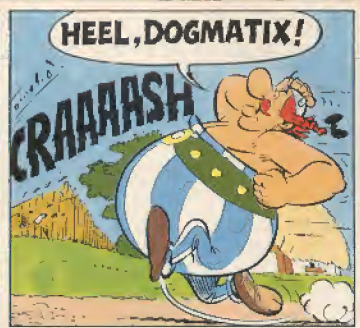
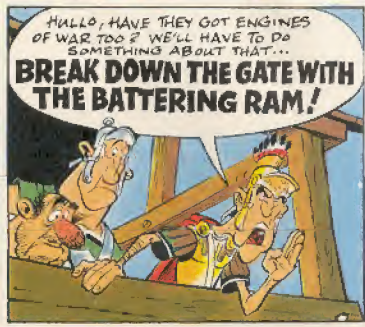
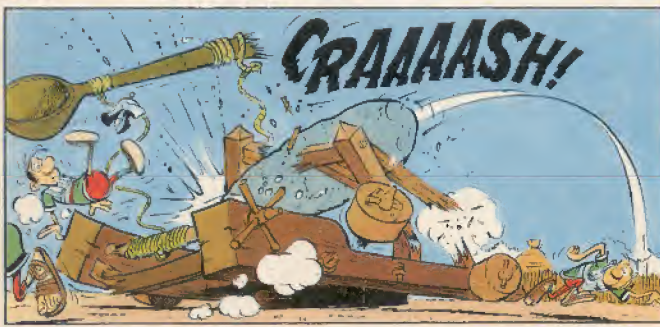
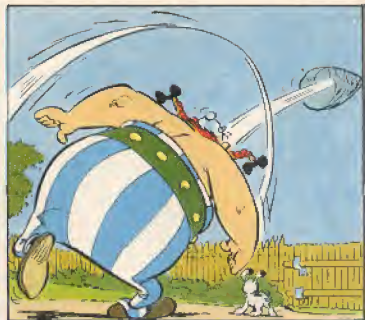




WILL YOU JUST LISTEN TO ME? THE ROMANS... SILENCE! SSH! SIT DOWN! SHUT UP!









**DOGMATIX!
YOOHOO!**



MEANWHILE ...

IT'S READY,
LADS!



AND...

CRAAAAASH!

VOTE FOR ME!

**DOGMATIX!
HERE!**

BUT WE KEEP
TELLING YOU HE
ISN'T HERE!

**REVERSE,
YOU FOOL!
REVERSE!**

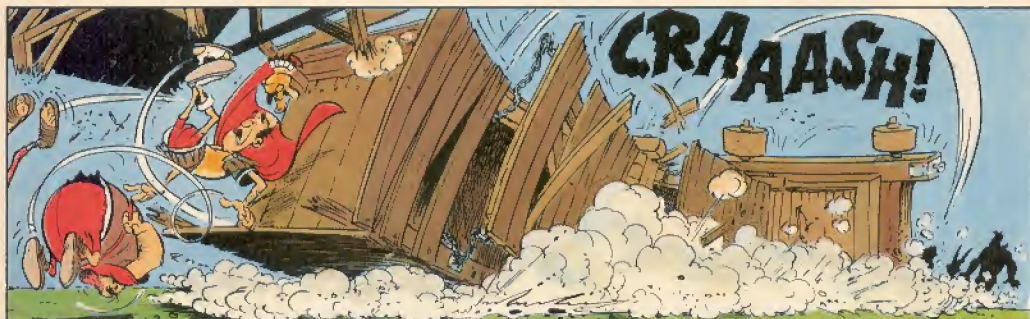


HEY THERE'S
SOME OF THEM UP
ON THAT TOWER.
SHALL WE GO
UP?

NO, LET'S GET
THEM DOWN!



**LET ME DOWN!
I TELL YOU, LET ME
DOOOOWWN!**



DON'T HURT ME! I'M A CIVILIAN! IF YOU WANT TO FIGHT, GO AND FIGHT THE SOLDIERS! FIGHT MY FRIEND OVER THERE ... HE RE-ENLISTED!

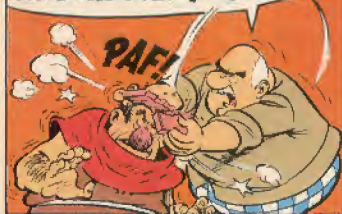


I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU, FAR FROM IT. I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU BACK YOUR PROPERTY ...

Caesar's Gift!



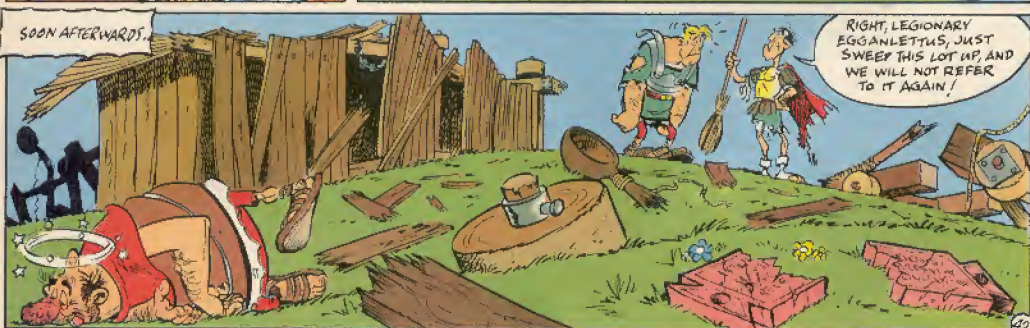
SO NOW ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH CHIEF VITALSTATISTIX AND HIS MEN!



HEY, WAIT A MINUTE! YOU WOULDN'T DO A THING LIKE THAT TO AN OLD FRIEND, WOULD YOU?



COME ON, LET'S GO HOME!



SOON AFTERWARDS...

RIGHT, LEGIONARY EGGANLETTUS, JUST SWEET THIS LOT UP, AND WE WILL NOT REFER TO IT AGAIN!

I THINK YOU'LL MAKE
THE VILLAGE A REALLY
GOOD CHIEF...

BUT I DON'T
WANT TO BE CHIEF
AT ALL!

ANYWAY, I DON'T THINK THIS
PEACEFUL COUNTRY LIFE SUITS
ME... I'M A LUTETIAN BORN
AND BRED, AFTER ALL!

BUT
ORTHOPAEDIX...

**SILENCE! I SAID WE'RE
GOING BACK TO LUTETIA!
THAT WAS WHAT YOU
WANTED WASN'T IT?**

I CAN'T WAIT TO TELL
THAT GREAT FLABBY LUMP
DITHYRAMBIX ALL
ABOUT THIS!

OH,
GOODY,
DAD!

WELL THEN,
LET'S HAVE A
PARTY!

COME ALONG,
ANGINA, I'LL
SHOW YOU OUR
LOCAL RECIPE
FOR BOAR.

DOWN SOUTH WHERE WE
LIVED THEY ADD A LOT OF
HERBS... I BROUGHT SOME
WITH ME. THEY REALLY DO
BRING OUT THE
FLAVOUR.

YOU LIKE
LUTETIA, DO
YOU, ANGINA?

OH YES, IMPEDIMENTA,
AND MY SISTER LIVES
THERE TOO.

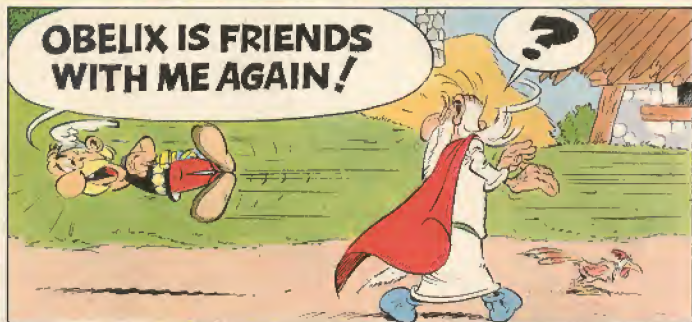
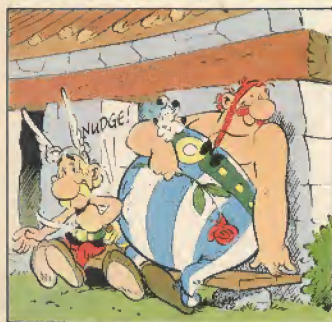
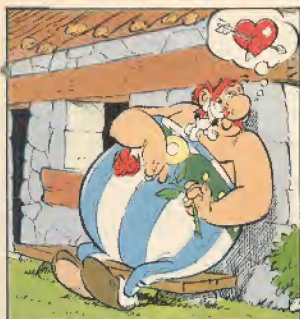
FANCY THAT!
I'VE GOT A
BROTHER IN
LUTETIA,
MY DEAR!

OH, YOU REALLY
MUST GIVE ME HIS
ADDRESS,
MY DEAR!

**VOTE
FOR ME!**

WHAT
ABOUT ME,
THEN?

OH,
BOTHER!



IN FACT, EVERYONE IS FRIENDS AGAIN.
UNDER THE STARRY SKY, ALL PARTIES
ARE RE-UNITED AROUND THE TABLE.
ALL PARTIES... FOR WE MUST NOT
FORGET THAT THIS HAPPENED VERY
LONG AGO, ABOUT 50 BC, AND
IN THOSE DAYS SUCH MATTERS
WERE NOT SO VERY IMPORTANT...



UNDER 20.
GOING UP